

A Mother Always Knows by **reddie_enthusiast**

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Summary:

Maggie Tozier loved her son very much. They had been close since Richie first learnt who his mother was and somehow, they both could read each other like an open book. Maggie was almost always able to tell what Richie needed and when, no matter what the circumstances. Even if she wasn't able to tell, Richie had never been able to keep a secret from her or lie to her. Just one look at him and she could tell he was hiding something.

or, Eddie and Richie's relationship, through the eyes of Maggie Tozier

A Mother Always Knows

Author's Note:

Yall, I had a very different idea for this, but I just went way off plan and wrote this. It's not great, but nothing I write is. I like it anyways

Maggie Tozier loved her son very much. They had been close since Richie first learnt who his mother was and somehow, they both could read each other like an open book. Maggie was almost always able to tell what Richie needed and when, no matter what the circumstances. Even if she wasn't able to tell, Richie had never been able to keep a secret from her or lie to her. Just one look at him and she could tell he was hiding something.

Although this annoyed her son at times, it had helped him a lot over the years, but probably most especially when he decided to come out to her. Richie had sat her down on the couch with the intention to tell her something very important, curling his hands around themselves, a nervous tic his mother already knew. She took his hands as tears welled up in both their eyes.

“Momma?”

Richie hadn't called her Momma in years, not even when he broke his leg when he was twelve after falling out of the tree while playing with Eddie in the backyard. She hated how broken he sounded, and she knew this must be serious if he was calling her that because he had already told her that he thought it was embarrassing to call her anything besides Mom now that he was fifteen and 'basically an adult.'

“I-I-I think I, I think I-“ he paused to wipe his nose with the edge of his sleeve. “I like boys, Momma. Well, not boys, per se. Boy, really. I like one boy, very very much. I’m gay.” He continued crying, reaching for a pillow to shove his face into.

“It’s okay, I know. I know, baby.” Maggie leaned over to wrap Richie in a hug that smelt like floral perfume and cookies. And she did know.

Maggie also knew that when Eddie started coming around more after the boys turned sixteen, if that was possible, that she had to have the talk with him and that they had to keep the door open if he was over. She could remember how that day went just as clearly as the day Richie told her he was gay.

“Mom! Do we have to do this *now* ? He’s right there!” Richie gestured widely towards Eddie, who was sitting right next to him and nearly got hit in the face with Richie’s flailing hand.

“Hey, hey, hey! Don’t think I haven’t seen those hickeys on Eddie’s neck, young man. Who knew your mouth was good for something other than talking?” Maggie replied with a smirk.

“Spaghetti doesn’t have any complaints about my mout-!”

Richie’s sentence was cut off by a sharp smack to his arm by a very

red Eddie, who's other hand was clutching at his neck.

"This is exactly why we're having this talk, Richard."

"Oh god. Eds, save me. She used my full name!" He fell dramatically onto Eddie's lap, "What a life this is."

Eddie spoke up for the first time since they sat down in the cozy living room, "Beep beep, you big idiot, she's just looking out for you. Maggie, I swear to you, I would never do anything that went against your rules."

"Oh, sweetie," Eddie blushed at the pet name and at Maggie's hand, which was running through his hair. "It's not you I'm worried about. It's this big sack of bones here. We're continuing this later, so don't think you're getting out of it."

Richie rolled down onto the floor with less grace than a beached whale, sending both boys into a fit of giggles.

"I'll be talking to you too, Eddie, so you better stick around tonight," Maggie said with a pat to both boys' cheeks on her way out of the room.

Eddie and Richie looked at each other with a similar look of fear on both their faces, even though they knew nothing bad would happen to them here.

Eventually, Maggie learnt how to read Eddie just as well as she could read Richie. Whenever Eddie needed to get away from his own mother, he would come over to the Toziers' house. Sometimes he would be crying, a blubbering mess that needed to be comforted by two people instead of just one. On those nights, the three of them would curl up onto the couch, Eddie stuck between Richie and Maggie, and they would watch Disney movies until they fell asleep like that, all cuddled in a big pile. Other nights, he would come bloody and bruised after getting caught by the Bowers' gang. Maggie would gently clean him up and send him upstairs with Richie until dinner was ready, knowing Eddie needed a good laugh.

Sometimes Maggie would find herself missing Eddie when he wasn't over for a long time and would invite him over. They would go see a movie, or stay at home and bake cookies for Richie to eat when he got home from his shift at the comic store. Sometimes they would go out shopping so Eddie could pick out clothes that he actually liked and they could both laugh at Richie as he tried to catch the birds that lingered in the mall parking lot, saying he was going to take it home for Stan to keep in his room. One particular day, Maggie called Eddie over. She was bored and planning to tidy up the house with Richie and wanted to know if he'd like to come help, even if it didn't sound very fun. Richie played his music loudly, so it could be heard all around the house. An old Chordettes song came on, one that Maggie had heard many times before, even before Richie and Eddie started dating. Richie made them all stop cleaning, and he pulled Eddie up so they could dance slowly to *Eddie, My Love* in the golden sunlight that was streaming through the windows. When the song ended, Eddie sat next to Maggie on the couch, giggling as he watched Richie try to rap *Rap God*, thinking no one could hear him as he ran down the stairs with a basket of laundry. Eddie leaned onto Maggie's shoulder and said,

“I’m going to marry your son one day, Maggie.”

She nodded in agreement because she already knew.

Later that night, Richie and Maggie sat at the island in their kitchen, watching Eddie making pasta on the stove for dinner, humming *Eddie, My Love* under his breath and swaying slightly in tune with the song. Richie turned to his mother and whispered in her ear, quietly, so Eddie wouldn’t hear him, with a seriousness she hadn’t heard from him since he came out,

“I’m going to make that man my husband, just you see.”

Maggie hummed, pressing a kiss to Richie’s forehead, “I believe it.”

She walked out of the kitchen with a stack of plates and cutlery so she could set the table, listening to Richie joke with Eddie about being able to taste ‘his spaghetti’s spaghetti’ and then hearing him repeat ‘somebody touch-a my spaghett’ in a terrible Italian accent.

Although Maggie had many happy memories with her boys, there were other, less pleasant ones. Usually, these ones involved Henry Bowers and his troupe of terrible friends. Maggie tried her best to keep both Richie and Eddie in good spirits whenever the bullying got

worse, but a person can only handle so much before they break.

One day, after school, when Richie and Eddie were seventeen, Richie came into the house quickly, not stopping to say hi to his mother before running up to his room. Maggie heard his door slam and knew for sure once she heard the loud, sad music coming from his room that something bad had happened.

She knocked tentatively on the door before opening it herself. "Richie? Baby? Are you okay?"

Richie was curled up in his blanket, and she could hear his sniffles through the music, "That's a dumb question, Mags." He said without any other context.

Maggie sat down, the bed creaking beneath her, "Do you want to talk about it?"

There was no verbal reply from her son, only the sight of his hand coming out from the blankets to turn his speaker off, filling the room with an uncomfortable silence that Maggie didn't hear ever, not even at night, because there was always some sort of commotion in here.

"Mom? Do you think I'm a bad person?"

Of course, there was no world where Maggie would ever think her son was a bad person, and she told him as such.

“You shouldn’t have someone like me as your son. You should have someone better, like Eddie. God, I don’t deserve Eddie.”

“Is this about Eddie, sweetie? Did you guys get into an argument?”

Maggie’s questions fell upon deaf ears as Richie started to ramble.

“I’m so dumb! Everything they say is right. I’m a nobody. I’m a terrible person. Why can’t I just be normal! I just want to be normal! Why can’t I be normal!”

Richie was sat up now, grasping tightly at his unruly hair. Maggie grabbed his hands, pulling them down away from his hair and holding him tightly as he sobbed, tears starting to fall from her own eyes now.

“Talk to me, please, Richie. Do you want me to call Eddie?”

“No! Don’t call him!”

“Then talk to me, baby!”

Richie was quiet again, well, as quiet as he could be with deep cries wracking his body as he clutched tightly at his mother’s soft knit sweater.

“Do you think it’s bad that I’m gay?”

Maggie was taken aback. Richie was always so comfortable with his sexuality, not caring what other people thought of him. “No! Of course not. There’s nothing wrong with who you are. Why do you ask?”

“We had to do our health lecture in gym class today, which normally wouldn’t be a bad thing because I just tune the lectures out anyways. Oops, I mean, I pay very close attention because school and gym class are very important even if Eds isn’t in the class for me to bug.” Richie laughed a little, “Anyways, this stupid lecture, which I realize now is a dumb thing to get worked up about, was basically a seventy-minute fucking criticism of my sexuality because the teacher is some wacked-out Christian who is basically a man version of Eddie’s mom. That was followed up by Jackasses Three locking me in a fucking locker after writing fag all over my arms. That’s all I am though, right? A stupid fucking fag.”

Maggie pulled out of the hug and Richie frowned at the lack of contact. She looked him dead in the eyes with a stern look on her face. “Richard Tozier. Every day, I am proud of the person you’ve become. You have an amazing group of friends, an amazing boyfriend-slash-future husband and an amazing personality. Never, in my entire life, would I think you don’t deserve all the good things you have. I love you so, so, so much. Nothing any stupid teachers or annoying kids say will convince me, or Eddie, or Stan, Bill, Bev, Mike or Ben otherwise. The people that matter will tell you the truth, so don’t believe anyone else. You know what I say to those people who are no good for anything other than being mean?”

She stood up, pulling Richie up with her. She stood up with her arms held high and her head tilted back.

“Fuck you!” she yelled, “Come on, Rich! Say it with me! Fuck you!”

Richie, who had looked very confused until then, wiped his tears. “Fuck you.”

“Louder! With feeling! Fuck you!”

“Fuck you!”

“Yeah! That’s what I’m talking about!”

“Fuck you! Fuck Bowers! Fuck smelly gym teacher! Fuck shitty dad who left us when I was two! And a big fuck you to Sonia Kaspbrak, because I know she feels the same about me as everyone else. I’m going to marry the fuck out of your son whether you like it or not! Fuck you!”

“Yes! Now! You’re going to get into the shower, and you’re going to wash these nonsense words off, and that snot because that’s not attractive. I’m going to call Eddie, and then I’m going to go to the movies and out for dinner so you can hang out with him by yourselves.”

Before Maggie left the room, Richie grabbed her shoulder and yanked

her back into another hug, "Thank you, Momma, I love you," he whispered into her hair.

When Eddie came and Richie had just come downstairs from the shower and Maggie was on her way out of the door, she heard Eddie say to Richie, "You're the cutest when you come out of the shower, I think. Because your hair is all nice and curly and your cheeks are pink."

"You only think that because that's what I look like when I'm fucking you."

Eddie gasped loudly, "Beep beep! Your mom is still here!"

"Pretend I didn't hear that. God knows I am," Maggie said in their direction.

"Don't worry, Mother, I have never seen a penis in my life. In fact, I don't even know what that is. Spaghetti? What is a, how you say? Penis?" Richie enunciated it in a way Maggie knew would make Eddie blush furiously. "I'm saving myself for marriage. But I'm also mighty impatient, so you might have to marry me today, Spaghetti."

"Stop it, Chee! Ask me again in five years."

Maggie laughed on her way out, "Be safe, boys!"

“Oh god! See what you’ve done! Stop being cute with me, I’m mad at you!”

Years later, when both boys had moved to New York for school and Maggie had decided to follow them after they graduated because there was nothing left for her in Derry, she got a call from a very nervous sounding Eddie asking her to lunch that day. She met him at a small cafe that was halfway between her house in Queens and Eddie and Richie’s house in Brooklyn. Maggie could see more clearly now how anxious Eddie was.

“Eddie, baby? You need to calm down, what’s wrong?”

Eddie ducked his head down, laughing a little, “Nothing. Nothing at all really. I want to ask you something.”

Already sensing where this conversation was going, Maggie gestured for him to continue.

“Do you remember that day I came over to help you and Richie clean the house in Derry, and I told you I was going to marry him one day? Well, I’m about to make sure that day is soon.” Eddie placed a small black box on the table in front of Maggie, “I just wanted to make sure you were okay with it before I ask him tonight.”

Maggie stood up, walking over to give Eddie an awkward hug that

resulted in her holding his head and him holding her waist, “Eddie, of course, I’m okay with it. I’m more than okay with it! I’ve been waiting for this day since the two of you met!”

Eddie laughed again, “Mags, you didn’t even know we were going to date then. We were only eight!”

“Ah, a mother always knows.”

Eddie’s expression turned solemn, “Well, a good mother does.”

“Don’t think about her. Don’t let her ruin this good moment. You have a good mother, silly, I’m sitting right here!”

Smiling widely, Eddie replied, “Yeah, I do, don’t I?”

After lunch, Maggie parted with Eddie, keeping to herself the same conversation she had had with Richie that morning at breakfast while wondering how her boys were always so in sync.

When the invitation to the wedding arrived in the mail and Richie had called her to tell her to start preparing a speech for the reception, she knew exactly what to say.

“Hello! I’m Maggie Tozier. Mother of the grooms,” She winced a little, “When I say it like that it sounds like they’re brothers.” Everyone around her laughed. “Even though I didn’t birth Eddie, he’s my son, even if not in the most literal sense of the word. I’ve watched both of those boys grow up, and I know all there is to know about them, but that’s mostly because Richie can’t keep a secret to save his life. I can recount every important thing in Richie’s life, and every important thing in Eddie’s life past age eight, because that’s when he met Richie, and anyone who knows Eddie knows he’s an oversharer. Anything Eddie told Richie was relayed back to me when he came home that night. Sometimes this was a good thing because I knew the things I needed to know to eventually grow close with him. Other times it was not so good, but that’s mostly because I don’t want to hear that Eddie masturbated for the first time that weekend while I’m trying to eat dinner.”

Maggie took a sip of her drink before continuing, letting more laughter die out, “I knew as soon as Richie brought Eddie home that first time that they were going to fall in love. I realize that sounds like a premature decision to make so early in their lives, but I just knew. When Richie came out to me when he was fifteen though, I was surprised I didn’t find him and Eddie covered in hickeys until a year later. Not long after they started dating for real, I started inviting Eddie over even more than before. One day, a Saturday, I called Eddie up and asked him to come over to keep me and Richie company while I forced him to clean the house with me. Richie played this old song, one you would recognize playing during the first dance, and made all three of us stop doing whatever it was we were doing so he could dance with Eddie in our living room. Right after, Eddie told me he was going to marry Richie one day. I believed it. Later that night, the same day, Richie told me he was going to marry Eddie. I bring this up because somehow the same thing happened last year. Richie called me up one morning, nervous as he was when he told me he was into boys. He invited me to breakfast at a little cafe that’s halfway between my house and theirs, showed me

a ring, and told me he was going to propose to Eddie that night. Coincidentally, Eddie also called me up, right after I had gotten home from breakfast and asked me to meet him at the same cafe I was just at, but this time for lunch. He was as nervous as Richie was. So I went to the cafe and then proceeded to have the exact same conversation with Eddie that I had had with Richie just before.”

Maggie looked over at her boys, who were blushing slightly while laughing at each other, no doubt talking about that.

“So to conclude this speech, I hope that Richie and Eddie continue to live their lives in sync. I wish you many great years. To Richie and Eddie!”

She went to go and hand the mic over to Bill, who was next in line for a speech before adding, “Oh, and boys? Don’t forget, Mother knows best.”

Author's Note:

plz give me feedback. comment, kudos, bookmark, idc. I am fueled by yall

edit: i remembered i forgot to explain why wentworth isn't in this, it's because i forgot he existed until i was 2000 words in, so i just wrote it as if he left when richie was little